

Discussion #1:

In your opinion, what is King County's most critical transportation need?

- Mike Taylor – I would like to see the region become one transportation agency. Everything coordinated. Funding from one source. Fares coordinated.
- John Jensen – We need to increase ridership on all modes. The system is not near capacity. People are waiting for light rail, but we can fill the buses now.
- Anirudh Sahni – We need new sources of revenue for transit. The gas tax should be able to be used for transit. We should look at an income tax or re-instituting the MVET.
- Claire Schary – I ditto everything said, especially Mike's comments. Better coordination would allow for new revenue sources and capacity management. We're still not looking at an integrated system.
- Ray Day, Jr. – How do we reduce the congestion we have right now? One example is the tunnel closure on weekends. We need better planning so it's more convenient for people to move using our current systems.
- John Coney – An increased mode split for transit. We're still in the birth pangs of making mass modes functional. Functionality comes from integration. Metro should be able to integrate with Sound Transit and Monorail.
- Dwight Baker – Integration. Metro is a basic system and we need to define where we're going in the future, incrementally for each area. We've got many political and land use problems. We need to define something specific, find reasonable funding, and fit it into a "big program approach."
- Dave Elliott – We're known throughout the country as the "slowest process" area in the nation. Everyone's competing for a small pot of money. We need one agency – lean – that does one study and then implements the project and figures out the taxing. We have a strong need to consolidate. RTID can be the solution.
- Holly Plackett – One transit agency, seamless and coordinated. As a region, we need to be dedicated to transportation choices. And, there should be an educational component to everything we do.
- Hans Brandall – We need a unified voice, especially in Washington D.C. We need to make road improvements that benefit Metro. The best advertisement for buses is being stuck in traffic and seeing the buses go by.
- Andy Bennett – People are split between roads and transit. It really doesn't work that way. Roads and transit work together. We need to educate folks that a good road system and good transit go together, at the regional level.
- Sandy Paul-Lyle – We still have a "wild west" mentality. Everyone does their own thing, including driving their own car. Seattle "gets it." Education is the biggest thing. People don't need cars as much as they think they do.

Discussion #2

In your opinion, what question needs to be answered so that the group works better?

- What is the purpose of TAC?
- What influence can we have?
- How do we measure success?
- Who should we listen to?
- How do we gather data? How do we gather opinions?
- How do we communicate better with the Council?
- What exactly is our charge?
- Should we specifically target some items to be more effective?
- Can we contact each of the entities with which we're supposed to interact to find out how to be more effective?
- Can we set up an e-mail blog or list-serve for an open discussion group?
- What can we say or do with regard to the state Open Meetings Act?
- How can we be most useful?
- How can we encompass complex data to reflect the public's interest? Do we need a committee system?
- How do we acquire resources in terms of money and time?
- How often should we meet?
- How do we acquire a standard approach to technology?

Discussion #3

What are the advantages/disadvantages of moving toward a Sounding Board model (i.e., more flexible, task-oriented).

- Establish a writing committee
- Limit ourselves to no more than two issues at a time
- Develop sub-committees to handle more in-depth information
- Present a model to staff and council for a web-based presence
- Start meetings at 6:00 p.m. to get more time for substantive discussions

Issues Discussions – Water Borne Transit

Issues of concern to members of TAC

- What does it take to get a new system going?
- Are there national/international examples of successful water-borne transit systems?
- How do you make it happen?
- How would the system be funded?
- Would the new system save time, given the need for transfers?
- How would it integrate into the existing system?

- Does it integrate with the Metro system?
- Is it year-round?
- What would be the mechanics of “back-up?” What if the vehicles break down? How often would maintenance be conducted? Is the service gone completely if there’s a vehicle breakdown?
- We need cost comparisons between this system, buses and street cars.
- What would be the environmental impacts? The public acceptance impacts?
- What would be the subsidy per passenger?
- How does it compare with bus/other forms of transit?
- Would we only have one manufacturer? Would we be able to sustain service over a long period of time?
- What have we learned from other pilot programs?
- How does it compare with Vancouver’s Seabus?
- Are there other model systems?
- Are the projections credible? Do projections based on other systems work here?
- Will the new I-520 project make this system obsolete?

Issues Discussions – Fare Increases

Issues of concern to members of TAC

- How would a fare increase impact low-income, student and disabled riders?
- It’s a two-way street – what are the advantages and disadvantages? What are the favorable and unfavorable impacts? How do we weigh those?
- Should the Council even have a specific fare recovery policy?
- What’s the goal? Do people object to subsidizing 75% of the total bus costs?
- What’s an effective amount to expect Metro to recover in fares?
- What’s the right and fair amount to expect Metro to recover in fares?
- How do investments in transit compare to investments in roads/SOVs?
- How do Europeans and Canadians do it?
- What about transit agencies that use the “honor system?” (Portland, others)
- Can Metro lower costs to avert a fare increase?
- What about discounts for frequent riders? Can the agency reward frequent users? (Example: All-day passes; employer-subsidized passes).

Issues Discussions – Marketing

Issues of concern to members of TAC

- Fare issues are related to marketing – it’s an inter-related subject.
- Does Metro’s marketing office target low-income, disabled and student riders?
- Why didn’t the Council approve a marketing budget for Metro?

- Is marketing needed? Is marketing appropriate for a government agency?
Can a government agency ethically target specific groups?
- Part of marketing is changing the image of service and bus interiors.
- Salesmanship needs to be combined with education.
- The efficiency of the system is a big marketing asset.
- You have to “make it cool” – make riding the bus the “in thing” to do
- Develop better Rider information through Smartcard.
- What are our target markets and how do we reach them?
- How do we measure the effectiveness of transit marketing?
- What do other agencies do? Here in the Puget Sound region, around the country, in other countries? (Example: In Boulder, Colorado, the local transit agency works with realtors to provide bus information to all new-comers.)
- What is the cost/benefit information for tax-payers?
- Does Metro have research on the barriers to using mass transit? (Answer: yes).
- Is our goal to find new riders, to retain existing riders, or to encourage existing riders to use the system more frequently?
- Should Metro contract with a private agency to handle its marketing?
- What about advertising in bus shelters?
- Can too much marketing drive people away? Riding the bus should be a positive experience. Too much advertising doesn’t provide people with a pleasant experience. (Example: Poetry on the Bus – makes taking the bus an experience to be remembered).

Issues Discussions – Sound Transit Phase II

Issues of concern to members of TAC

- Integration issues – TAC needs to take a stand on the advisability of better integration between Metro and ST
- How can we handle more buses on downtown streets?
- What happens if the Sound Transit Phase II vote is negative?
- In South County, the feeling among most people is “finish what you’ve started.” (Add: In East King County as well).
- How can we analyze Metro/ST interface issues?
- This might be an issue that we want to include in each monthly meeting
- How can Metro get more funding from other systems?
- *Can TAC influence County government to be more supportive of the concept of multiple regional mass transit systems?*

ACTION ITEMS

- Can TAC send a letter to each County Councilmember?
- The letter should list five or six ways in which things have improved
- The letter could also be turned into an op-ed piece which is generally supportive of the concept of transportation choices across the region.

Issues Discussions – Funding for Metro Transit

Issues of concern to members of TAC

- If RTID is amended to include funding for transit services, can TAC advise the Council on both RTID and the Sound Transit Phase II vote?
- How can we effect these issues?
- Can we write an editorial or op-ed piece?
- We should make the case that transit funding is essential to RTID success. Future operations, plus.
- What relations does RTID have to PSRC?
- The suburban cities and Small Cities Mayors Association want to be in on this discussion.
- Another issue is the .1% sales tax increase that could still be used for increased transit funding.
- We should discuss a range of ideas for taxing authority options
- We should look into the Local Investment District process

ACTION ITEMS

Write a letter to the chairs of the House and Senate Transportation Committees, advocating that the RTID legislation be amended to include transit operations funding options.